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# DESIGN

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CREATIVE ARTS • INDUSTRY • LEISURE • EDUCATION

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# DESIGN

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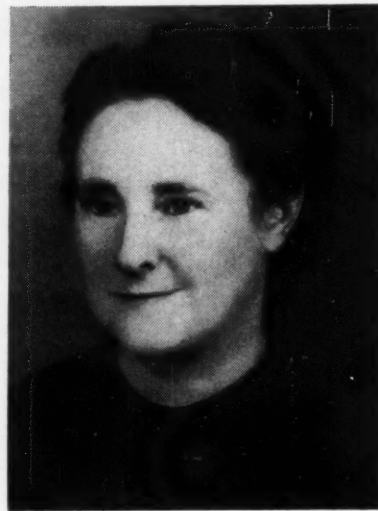
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## MEET OUR ADVISORS

CLARA MacGOWAN is Assistant Professor of Art, Northwestern University and President of the Department of Art Education of the National Education Association.



Besides being an educator, she is an artist and writer. A graduate of the University of Washington, with a M. F. A. degree, she also studied with the modern French masters, Andre L'Hote and Fernand Leger in Paris. She has traveled widely in Europe, having painted in France, Switzerland, Italy, Greece, Turkey and Asia Minor. In more recent years she has painted in Mexico and through-

out the mountainous areas of Western United States and Canada.

Miss MacGowan has had one-artist exhibitions of her paintings in Vienna, Paris, New York and Chicago. For several years she has exhibited annually at the Delphic Studios in New York. A painter of abstractions and western landscapes, and working as well in water color and prints, she has shown her work in such art institutions and galleries as the Art Institute, Chicago; Riverside Museum, New York, Denver Art Museum; Chicago Arts Club, etc. During the period of 1935-37 she was honored with the Presidency of the Chicago Society of Arts, the oldest art organization in Chicago, which was founded in 1888 and whose membership constitutes the most progressive artists of the Chicago area. It was during her term as president that the famous "Artists Calendars" were begun; she has herself always contributed to these.

Miss MacGowan is a member of many art organizations and university groups and a member of Phi Beta and Phi Mu Gamma. In addition to her classes in creative work at Northwestern, she is in charge of Northwestern's student exhibitions in the Big Ten Art Show, and besides being president of the Department of Art Education, to which office she was elected in June, 1938 in New York and reelected July, 1939 at San Francisco, she is chairman of the National Committee on Research for Determining Teacher Qualifications in Art, of the Department of Art Education.

## N. E. A. CONVENTION

The winter convention of the Department of Art Education, N. E. A., at St. Louis, Missouri, Feb. 26-27, was marked not only by a large list of distinguished speakers, discussing a wide range of subjects in art education, but also by an announcement of great importance.

Clara MacGowan, president of the Department, who organized and directed the convention, announced at the banquet that Dr. Ray Faulkner had accepted the chairmanship of a new committee, to be known as "The National Committee on Research in Art Education of the Department of Art Education of the N. E. A." This committee, whose full personnel will be determined in the future, will have an initial life period of ten years. It will examine a whole field of art education, formulate problems which need solution and define areas in which research must be done before intelligent programs can be planned. Studies will be both carried out and directed by the committee. A preliminary statement of this committee's plan of work will appear in the Department's 1940 bulletin, to be published in the fall of 1940.



# THE HANDCRAFTS

Never before has any agency attempted such a work as the compilation which has progressed in America as part of the Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration. Making record drawings of handicrafts indigenous to American culture, and collecting data on these native arts help to form the groundwork for a nationwide pictorial survey of design in the American decorative arts. No other study has ever attempted as significant a study. European countries have long had such records of their arts. Through the handicrafts we may understand the philosophies and ideals of our early American culture. We may likewise learn much to help us in solving some of our problems today in the way of leisure-time activity, good taste, and proper use of materials.

The Index of American design includes art objects which were made in America from its earliest settlement until 1890. First begun in New York, work has progressed in various sections of the country from New England to California, with workers concentrating on the characteristic American art of their respective localities.

## FURNITURE

One of the largest portfolios of the Index of American Design is devoted to furniture. Here may be seen reproductions of the early carved chests of Massachusetts and Connecticut; the block front furniture of Newport; the finely proportioned mahogany and cherry of the cabinetmakers of New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston which carry the main body of American design from Seventeenth Century severity into the revived classicism of the early Republican period.

Admiration of prosperous residents of the coastal cities for English fashions are reflected in interpretations of Chippendale, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton styles. But distinctive American types also are shown in their development through adaptations to living conditions of a new country and the frequent necessity for using native woods.

Victorian pieces are charming despite their admixture of several styles. The less significant but familiar phases of the furniture group include Shaker pieces which anticipated modern design in their functional simplicity, the gaily painted chests and cupboards of the Pennsylvania-Germans and the picturesque adaptations of Spanish styles in the Southwest.

## CERAMICS

In the field of ceramics, emphasis has been placed upon the decorative pottery of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries. Extensive work also has been done in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania in the difficult field of American glass, the resulting plates ranging from the clear engraved glasses of "Baron" Steigel in Pennsylvania to the brown and green flasks stamped with busts of such popular idols as Jenny Lind and Lafayette. Also to be found in this portfolio are reproductions of the Wares of Wister and other south Hersey factories, and Amelong glass of Maryland and the pressed Sandwich glass so popular in Eastern and Middle Western states during the later period.

Glass making was the best known of the early industries in New Jersey. Casper Wistar made glass in Salem County as early as 1789, and later a German family named Stenger started a factory in Glassboro. Rare glass was made at Redfield near Syracuse, New York. Ohio produced four general groups of ceramics: earthenware, comprising glazed and unglazed red ware and glazed yellow ware; salt glazed stoneware; Upper Muskingum Valley pottery lamps; and miniature examples of pottery. Glass of fine quality was produced at Zanesville, Ravenna, and Mantua.

## TEXTILES

The textiles group includes the patterns of crewel work done in New England in the Seventeenth Century; the geometrical variations of the coverlets woven on hand looms by the women of the pioneer era, and the not-so-practical but quaint expression worked in samplers and embroidered pictures. Quilts, representing many types of design popular throughout the country between 1750 and 1850, range from early designs such as "King David's Crown" through such political and historical motifs as "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too" and "Whig Rose" to such good old standbys as "The Pine Tree" and "Star of Bethlehem."

Costumes and accessories, devoted, of course, to the fashions worn by women, range all the way to the hooded severity of a Shaker Cape to late Eighteenth Century elegance. There were elaborate brocades and wide hooped skirts of late Colonial times. The straight, slender dresses were to be seen everywhere immediately after the French Revolution. The short, full skirts, the fur-belowes which ushered in the early days of the reign of Queen Victoria, the bustles, bows, and trains of the early Seventies all found their places in the story of milady and her fashions. They are colorful and gay and reveal a significant phase of American life.

Felix Payant

Mr. Alexander J. Kostellow, Supervisor of Design and Structure at the Pratt Institute, is well-known in three fields—painting, industrial design and education. As a painter, he has won many awards, among them Honorable Mention for his "After Dinner" canvas, in the 1933 International Exhibition. In the field of industrial design, Mr. Kostellow has been Director of Product Development and Engineering for the U. S. Glass Co., Vice President in charge of Product Development for the Columbia Radiator Co. (which position he still retains), and has served as a consultant to a diversified line of industries. Mr. Kostellow, in his capacity as educator, has been head of Industrial Design at the Carnegie Institute of Technology, where he held an Associate Professorship for nine years prior to his present position with Pratt Institute.

Born in Persia, Mr. Kostellow received his academic education in Paris and at the University of Berlin. He came to this country in 1916 and studied art at the National Academy, Art Students' League, Kansas City Art Institute, and, privately, with Anthony Angarola and Vaclav Vytyl.

Kostellow is talented, dynamic, and alert; ever conscious of the effects of science and invention on the culture and expression of our people. He is an American; although born many miles from our shores, he is undoubtedly more American in spirit than many of us who boast that our ancestors were present at the birth of Americanism.

Mr. Kostellow is one of the few men in America today favorably fitted by background, training, experience, and viewpoint to lead Art Education along the broad road it must follow if it is to be related to our socio-technico-economic civilization, and, consequently, have the vitality which we associate with past eras of accomplishment.



Photo by Walter Civardi

## DESIGN AND STRUCTURE PROGRAM of the PRATT INSTITUTE ART SCHOOL

**By Alexander J. Kostellow**

Many factors were instrumental in adopting the program of design and structural representation at the Art School of Pratt Institute. My experience of many years as painter, teacher and designer for industry convinced me that some drastic change had to be introduced into the approach to Art Education. Discussions with industrialists, merchandisers, designers and educators confirmed this conviction. Mr. Donald R. Dohner, Art Director of the Westinghouse Electric, greatly helped me to formulate a workable method of approach. Due to him, I began to see definite relationship of art to commerce and industry. It was clearly to be seen that, in the light of contemporary technics, the craft method of manual training is more or less a variation of occupational therapy. The conditioning factors of mass production for mass acceptance and style trends have to be comprehended by the artist who wants to fit into the socio-economic life of our country.

Last year Mr. James C. Boudreau, Director of the Art School of Pratt Institute, invited me to collaborate with him in building a curriculum of design and structure. This presented an opportunity to apply the research on a scale large enough for diversified purposes. The curriculum is now in progress, and the outline of our program follows:

We assume that the function of the Art School of

Pratt Institute is an active participation in contemporary American life. This we can achieve by being of service to commerce and industry, and, to this end, we are training young people to fit into the social, technico-economic scheme of which they are a part.

Inasmuch as it is impossible to foretell the specific application to which the student's experience will be put, our philosophy is that his training in the first years must be both fundamental and generic, permitting him to concentrate on professional problems in the later years of his studies. To achieve this aim, we have introduced a Foundation Year Course, which has its roots in human experience in art, in general, and in American life and mode of living today, in particular. So much has been written already about beauty and function, that it seems unnecessary at this time to elaborate further on them. Unquestionably, even the prehistoric man possessed the divine gift not only to react to and enjoy beauty, but also to create it. Man's earliest attempts to create articles of useful function bear signs of experimentation in that direction. This primitive instinct to use the materials at hand and to invent tools for its manipulation always went hand in hand with the creation of beauty integrated with function. Today this tendency has grown to amazing proportions.





Pratt Institute Photos

*Above: Architectonics, a problem in the relationship of positive volumes in the form of geometric problems.*

*Right: Dynamics, in which the student proceeds to interpret organic forms with lines in space.*



There is hardly a field of human activity which does not, in some way, employ persons trained in the visual arts. The growth of our own American aesthetic expression could not keep pace with the rapid development of our commerce and industry due to scientific progress. The technique of production and distribution which has lifted the standards of living of our nation beyond those of any other country in the world left little time, at the turn of the century, to incorporate more than a fleeting expression of the American aesthetic, creative spirit. At first we resorted to the adaptation of previous styles, which grew from the methods of handicraft design; and later we fell under the influence of European tendencies. However, in the last few years there has been a very definite effort to create our own Ameri-

can style to correspond to our mode of living and our way of looking at things.

This movement is gaining momentum by the minute. Commerce and industry hungrily absorb the artists who think of a machine as a contemporary tool for mass production. Therefore our aim is to train the students of the Art School to fit definitely into this social technico-economic picture of cultural America, so that they may participate by contributing to the enrichment of our national life. We want our students to become artists without mannerisms, practical and keenly aware of existing conditions in the fields of commerce and industry, and with a developed imagination which reaches beyond the present into the future. To achieve these aims we found no single answer in the curriculum of the existing art and technical schools, and we had to devise methods which would enable our student to develop to the utmost his potential creative ability, with a purpose — for a purpose.

The old style of drawing for the sake of drawing—designing as a luxurious application—had to give way to a more basic method, whereby the student would

acquire controlled knowledge in the elements of design and presentation that would liberate him. The terminology used by the designers and artists had to be taken from the controversial category, so that the meaning of terms would not confuse the issues. We had to clarify the word "design," in order that our pedagogical objectives would lead to the professional field without too many detours and by-passes. To us, "design" means the objectification of an idea through organized control of conditioning factors. It expresses an intent—it offers a manner of solution, and becomes the finished product.

Inasmuch as the entire Pratt Art School program is dedicated to the idea of visual experience, our first step is to develop the visual perceptions of the student. We have also the objective of extending his



*Movement of Planes, in which the plane begins to exist independently, leading the eye from one direction to another.*



*Plastic Concept, participation of space emphasized as it effects the balance and interplay of positive and negative volume.*

intellectual concepts, because he must comprehend the contemporary technico-economic set-up. So, simultaneously, in acquainting him with the world of human creation, we require the student to observe very closely contemporary life with its involved technics. The student's experience in the Foundation Year consists of two-dimensional and three-dimensional design, art history, color, structural representation, field and museum research. One of our methods is to teach the student to isolate—that is abstract—from the maze of material about him, certain qualities which are constant in character, so that he may use them when he needs and wants them, in any kind of a problem he encounters.

This is the reason for the great variety of materials we adopted for the student's use in the course of his studies. We shall enumerate just a few of the

experiences in the course of three-dimensional design to illustrate how our method works.

We start with architectonics; a problem in the relationship of positive volumes in the form of geometric solids, in plasticene. The very nature of the material prevents the introduction of linear movements—it acquaints the student with the structure of architectonics; namely, enclosed space, shapes. He learns how to integrate various sizes and forms into an organized unit—he learns to evaluate his work from many angles—he also gets an idea of inherent and comparative proportions.

From the expression of mass coordination we introduce the student to the problem of dynamics, in which he proceeds to interpret organic forms with lines in space (wire figures). The nature of this material does not permit him to produce the bulk of a



solid or the tactility of a plane. Therefore, it is much easier for him to concentrate on the expression of directional forces, dynamic movement, formal qualities, and gesture of a given problem.

In the third problem the student makes the transition from architectonics to plastic situations, in which the plane begins to exist independently, leading the eye from one direction to another. In this case sheet metal is used as the conditioning factor controlling the design because it excludes bulk and line.

The fourth problem is that of plastic concept, where the participation of space is emphasized as it effects the balance and interplay of positive and negative volumes. We return here to plasticine as the most easily manipulated material. The problem is based on living forms, but again the student isolates from the source material only those elements which produce the necessary qualities of plasticity.

In order not to depart too far from professional objectives, and also to introduce the meaning of style, we present at this time the ceramic figure. From time immemorial ceramic figures have expressed contemporary style tendencies. We have only to think of Egyptian ceramics, Greek ceramics, Dresden china, Sevres china, Viennese ceramics, Bennington ceramics, to realize how true this is.

From the ceramic problem we proceed to the study of convexities. The student is asked to create forms which are expanding by nature. This problem implies organic growth—the development from the simple to the complex. This experience brings into play the unfolding of forms into space, the oppositional relations of curves, the balance of static versus dynamic forces, and a new emphasis on organic unity. As in the other problems, the student starts with natural forms as a point of departure, but he presents only the expression of those forces which the material of his choice permits him.

After this problem we introduce to the student, the student proceeds to the study of negative volume forms, non-representative in character. In this problem of concavities, the student has the choice of the following materials: wood, stone, or hard plaster. With power-driven tools, he carves into the solid block, designing space forms with concavities; the emphasis is placed on the negative volumes rather than the positive.

After this problem, we introduce to the student, space, which we define for him as a three-dimensional concept forming the base for design and structure, whether it is materialized into positive volumes or remains a negative volume. We emphasize the fact that there is a very definite relationship of all things designed within a three-dimensional concept; e. g., objects in a room, the arrangement of which is related to the space of the room, compelling an inter-relationship of forms. Space incorporates the dynamic qualities of tension, expansion, flows, balance, and plasticity. The student starts out with a stage

Continued on page 24



*Above: The Ceramic Figure, in which professional objectives are kept in view.*

*Below: Problem in Texture, given to the student in the two-dimensional design course.*





Baxtresser Photo



## Philipp Yost

*Industrial Designer, Decorator, Painter, and Instructor in Design at the School of the Albright Gallery, Buffalo, New York.*

Philipp Yost was born in Auburn, Nebraska, in 1914. There he had his elementary schooling, and when he was thirteen moved with his family to Lincoln. He attended Lincoln High School and took advantage of all the art course offered. He was graduated when he was sixteen. During this time the construction of the state capital was under way, and it played a large part in developing his interest in design. The traveling exhibitions at the University likewise furthered his art interest. While in his last two years in high school, he exhibited with the Nebraska Society of Artists in Omaha, and in the Mid-west show at the Kansas City Art Institute.

In 1931 he entered the Cleveland School of Art on a scholarship and studied there for one year. The following year he attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago by means of a working scholarship. He was a member of the Art Students League of that school and exhibited with them. Also his work was shown in the Chicago show held at the Institute. During these two years his family had changed residence from Lincoln to Lawrence, Kansas. So the greater part of the following two years found him enrolled as a special student at the University of Kansas. He exhibited again with the Mid-West show, and in 1934 received the honorable mention for one of his paintings in the Kansas City Sweepstakes show.

In the spring of 1934 he sold a wallpaper design and with the money set out to get started in the design field in New York. There he found employment with a design studio, but remained with them for only a few weeks. He realized the limitations of such a position and decided to try selling directly to the various concerns. Mr. Yost has been contributing to the design field ever since. Several textile firms, in whose lines may be found examples of his work, are Howard and Schaffer, Inc., Kent-Bragline, Inc., The Imperial Paper and Color Corp., and M. H. Birge and Sons, Inc.

He is now in his fourth year as instructor in design at the school of the Albright Gallery in Buffalo. He is an active member in The Patteran Art Society of that city and has exhibited in the Western New York show, the Great Lakes Show, the Patteran show of last season at the Riverside Museum in New York, and is represented in the present traveling show of the Patteran. In 1937 he received the Patteran Purchase award in the Western New York show, and is now represented in the permanent collection of the Albright Gallery.

There are few principles when it comes to teaching as far as Mr. Yost is concerned. He discourages set theories in both design and color, and sets about to bring out the personal creative style of each student and then lets him develop his own theories if need be. A course in Historic Ornament is given, not as a means to an end, but rather to store up in the minds of the prospective designers, material which may later prove of value when they enter the design field.

Two views of a recently decorated room for Miss Esther Punnett, young daughter of Mrs. Thomas R. Punnett of Buffalo, New York. The room was designed with consideration for the style of the home and some fine pieces of Victorian furniture belonging to the family. The coloring was keyed around two antique Bavarian needlepoints, which are framed in antiqued white frames and hang on either side of the dresser. The wallpaper repeats these needlepoints in both color and Peasant motif. The colorings are fuchsia, dusty blue, yellow ochre, accents of burgundy, and an abundance of white.

The eleven foot ceiling, papered in pale blue, was lowered by means of a drop border. This border follows the wall and forms the protruding testers above the beds, the window cornices and the alcove cornice. The woodwork is in dusty blue. The love seat is fuchsia and white candy stripe satin, while the lady's chair is upholstered in ochre crushed silk velvet. A pair of side chairs pick up the fuchsia color in their damask cover with ochre rosettes forming an all-over pattern. The antique hooked rug in front of the love seat is off-white ground, with a pink horse and burgundy acorns and leaves in the corners.

The beds were rescued from the maid's rooms and once again they now glow in all their past splendor. However now the head piece has been removed and the foot board takes its place beneath the testers. White sateen bedspreads, the white net curtains and the white rugs all were used not only because they afford the needed light touch, but because they are practical and tub proof. White goat skin rugs, flanking the beds, give a texture touch in contrast to the rag rug.



**Left: Victorian**

A 50-inch printed linen, utilizing plums and cherries as the motif theme. The all-over effect makes it equally suitable for either draperies or slip covers.

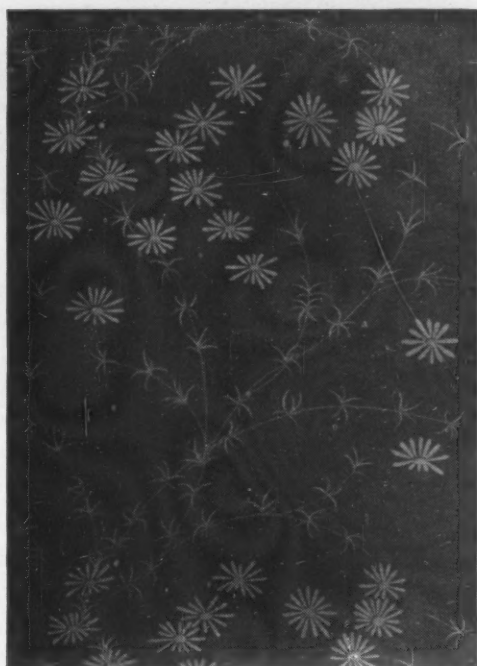
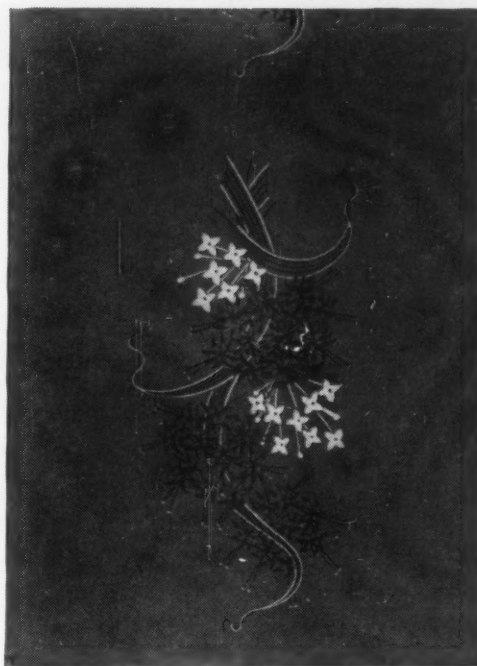
**Right: Marsh Berry**

A stylized conception of a wild scrub Mr. Yost saw in New England several summers ago. The large motif is repeated but twice in the 50-inch material width. More adaptable for slip covers. Printed on linen.



**Left: Sunburst**

The light, open effect of these floral motifs with ribbon grass form a spot pattern. The grouping is built on the 8-curve to afford some motion to an otherwise static spot pattern. The paper is 18 inches wide with an 18-inch repeat.



**Right: Forsythia**

A wall paper with a highly simplified conception of nature motifs. The direction of the daisys forms a counter-balance to the movement of the forsythia. Presented as light pattern on darker ground, and also dark pattern on light ground.

**Left: Swedish Modern**

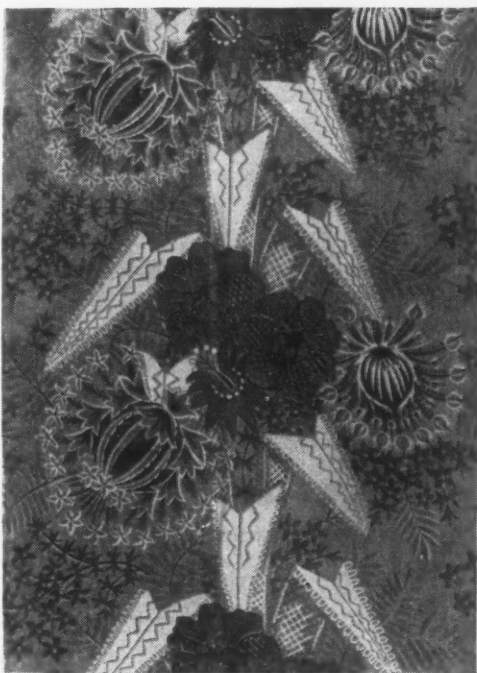
Printed linen, 50 inches wide. A free brush treatment of fantastic vegetation. Flat in character. Presented in a variety of gay color combinations.

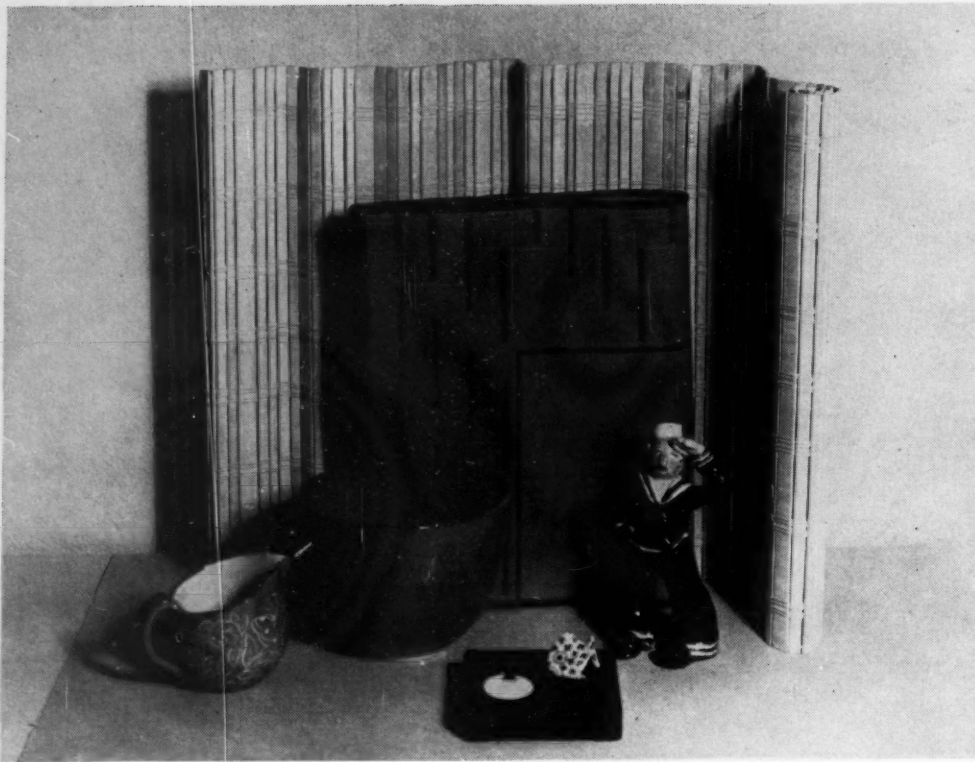
**Right: Tropical Fruit**

The colorings as well as the motifs on this printed linen are suggestive of southern regions. Material 50 inches wide. The motif a drop repeat.

Swedish Modern, Marsh Berry, Tropical Fruit, and Victorian, courtesy of Howard and Shaffer, Inc., New York City.

Forsythia and Sunburst wall papers courtesy Katzenbach and Warren, Inc., New York City.





*Articles designed and executed  
by Junior and Senior High  
School students at Los Angeles,  
California.*

## Design Experiences for Children

A visitor in our midst asked to see the work of our local school children in art. He wished to see, he explained, both creative expression and design. His conviction that painting is creative and that design is not was a viewpoint we could not share. We grant, however, that such an impression may easily be given to a child who is encouraged to paint freely, but who is permitted to copy a picture as a "design" for his book cover, or who is required to make something in a craft class by following a series of dictated instructions.

If design is to be a valid experience in the school curriculum it must offer as great a challenge to our students' creative effort as does painting. Children may proceed more formally in design because their objectives are more limited, and they must limit their procedure to recognize these objectives. The book cover, the ring, the beach sandals, the textile, must be of a certain size, of certain material, for a certain definite use. But in the designing and making of any of these things the understanding teacher opens the way to spontaneity of expression as well as to obedience to conditions. Such an experience then becomes highly valuable because it is a life situation. Always liberty and law must go hand in hand.

Guiding the design experiences of children places many responsibilities on the teacher, if he hopes to

By Jessie Miles Lewis  
Supv. of Art Education  
Los Angeles, California

cultivate art judgment. One is opportunity for original application as a means of comprehending design principles, rather than depending upon copied ideas or upon problems trivial and specific, that begin and end their lives on paper. Another serious obligation is to secure for children the earliest possible chance to work three dimensionally. Also, the true teacher is concerned with so managing his guidance that the child sees the whole article as the design, and the decoration as a related grace, a part, which recognizes function and structure. Every valuable design problem is a means by which through his needs and wishes, the student discovers fundamental relationships. The newer and more informal program of curriculum, with artificial barriers between subject fields disappearing, is helping to bring vitality to children's design. Art, once kept in the art room, now happily is beginning to permeate the whole school experience. The pupil who has arranged fruits and flowers, who has modeled clay figures to illustrate some interest, who has been responsible for the plan and placing of an exhibit, is on the road to a concept of structural composition. He has



*With one succulent for accent,  
rocks from a student's collection  
are composed on a black  
lacquer mat.*



encountered the experience of creating rhythm, harmony, and balance with concerns important in his living. He has used his sense of discrimination—the only way in the world to make it grow.

Another opportunity we crave for our children in the interest of a good sense of design is the experience of finding, through observation and discussion, important art principles expressed in painting. Students need many revelations of truth to see its universal application. To find the same laws of composition bringing harmony to a fine painting and to a simple craft problem is illuminating indeed to the young designer. A case in point concerns movement, the essence of modern design. I have seen whole groups of students change a meager notion of movement to a clear concept by taking an "eye journey" through fine painting, under enthusiastic guidance. The many beautiful color reproductions of pictures now available are making a decided contribution to a broad realization of design among students who have been encouraged to study their composition. Similarly, the student who has discovered the charm of a sequence of related textures in his flower arrangement class, is encouraged when, on a field trip to a shop, he finds the same art problem confronting the designer of interiors or clothes.

It is essential for the design teacher to keep abreast with current interests, fashion trends, and new materials developed by science. An instructor who clings to the same problem by which he himself learned the processes involved is not serving children. Our youth are essentially of today. Events and situations locally important and timely are sure

to be in their minds. The teacher aware of the march of industry and events, and also well grounded in design and color brings her taste and ingenuity into relation with current modes and trends which interest youth, and provides worthy and lively student experience. Even very transient notions can be turned to account in the hands of a teacher with discrimination to evaluate them wisely, though of course danger lurks here. Take for example the rage for making things of salvage material. Something made of nothing can easily become nothing made of something and a source of wonder as to why it was made at all. Much salvage material can be used, but design experience must not be subordinated to a determination to utilize salvage, or to the pursuit of a foolish flair. A design or craft instructor needs training, tact and tenacity, for his guidance philosophy includes active disapproval of bad taste as well as approval of good.

Color study must parallel the consideration of design. The two fields cannot be divorced. In Southern California where color observation is the common experience of all children, much design comprehension comes through its study alone, which continues consistently from kindergarten through high school. The little child uses and enjoys color: the older student creates harmonies through the application of design principles to the scientific facts concerning light. Color study should not be confined to school paints. It should involve everything of interest available; from nature, from past cultures, from present achievements. Amounts and distribution of color, fundamentally a design concern, should be given equal consideration with hue, value, and in-



*This group represents designers from elementary school to Junior College.*

*Three-dimensional composition for appreciation.*



tensity in observation of nature and in the designing and execution of useful things.

Everything we choose and use from the industrial world is a design. Nature's world shows us every great principle of beauty perfectly expressed. If we wish for our children the capacity to recognize and enjoy beauty we must help them to learn to see. If they are to live beautifully, we must secure for them a continuity of experiences in realizing beauty's elements: line, form, color, dark and light, texture, space; rhythm, harmony, and balance. To be creative these experiences must foster original expression. They must emanate directly or indirectly from children's own concerns. To be sensible, everything that students design and make must relate to personal, home, or school life through utility. The design instructor is an important factor. He must have taste as well as a knowledge of processes. He must keep in mind that individual capacity dictates the standard of technique. Since our children must live and work with other people, he must realize that all art experience must be socially significant. He must inspire habits of cooperation and a respect for the sincere work of others. He must help his students to find a nice balance of free expression and obedience to necessary conditions, a great law of democratic living.

*Another interesting example of expression in clay related to arrangement.*





# *What is* CREATIVE ABILITY?

By Clifton A. Gayne  
Instructor in Art  
University of Minnesota

In discussions about creative activity there seems to be wider agreement on one point than on any other. All creative activity is an expression by the child, in his own terms, of some thought or feeling which is going on inside him. The teacher or any other adult cannot impose this feeling from without, any more than she can dictate the form in which it must be expressed, though she may stimulate and encourage him.

With that one generalization established, many leading exponents of creative activity part company each to go his separate way.

There is some disagreement as to whether creative activity is expressed best in terms of representation or design or a combination of both.

We still have with us a good sized group who have developed and are applying systematically specific formulas for producing creative work. An examination of many courses of study and textbooks will illustrate the care with which some of these methods have been worked out, and their wide acceptance. The primary objective of these lessons is the production of drawings which have a beauty and spontaneity suggestive of creative activity while kept safely within the bounds of conventional practices. Dictated lessons in "freedom" are not unknown.

Frequently we cannot find fault with the visible results. Startling beauty is obtained by methods which theoretically should not work so well. The questions that concern us, however, in regard to work of this nature are: What is its effect on the child, how does it serve his needs and purposes, and to what extent does it contribute to his wholesome development? We wonder what jurisdiction can be offered for the hours of practice producing axial, radial, and central balance. Undoubtedly such practices result in some gains, but under a program more in line with the interests and actual needs of the child even greater gains could be expected. Although this group pays vocal tribute to creative activity I hesitate to include it with those who have given the term a richer meaning.

From this point on there is a more exhilarating spirit of adventure and truth-seeking, although little unanimity of thought. On one extreme a rigid policy of "hands-off" is followed. Paints, clay, or craft materials are available for the child to use whenever the spirit moves him. There are no set art periods and the child is never urged to use art materials unless he wishes to do so on his own initiative. They

recognize the precious value of originality; the slightly different interpretation that every individual can give to our world. Creative ability is without doubt the highest form of power to which man can attain. Nothing can surpass the act of enriching the world by something of beauty or significance which did not previously exist. The gathering, retention, and reorganization of facts is of minor importance and subordinate to the activity which synthesizes knowledge and emotions into a completely unique and independent creation.

During this process of creation the child undergoes a feeling of unified concentration which makes a significant contribution to his educational growth. The extreme "progressives," fearful lest this spirit be stifled or distorted, carefully avoid influencing the child in any way. They realize that often the child, while satisfying inner needs by self expression, at the moment may not think of his work as a form of communication. Children often sing or recite to themselves for their own satisfaction rather than to entertain their companions. Many works of art are produced in this same spirit.

In their zeal to protect the child from outside influences the "hands-off" group insists that the school-room should be plain and simple with no decorations which might set up artificial standards. Illustrated books are taboo for they introduce conceptions which do not belong to the children. Even excursions are dispensed with to prevent external objects from replacing the pure visions of the child.

The weakness of this type of program is readily apparent. Children express what they come into contact with, and if they have few stimulating experiences during their school day, they are likely to fall back on the limited experiences that they do have. If there are no adult illustrations to see, they tend to be influenced by the work produced by their classmates.

The well-known beautiful designs produced by the pupils of Franz Cizek illustrate this tendency. While everything is done to reduce outside influences to a minimum, much of the work shows unmistakable signs of inbreeding within the group. We have to ask ourselves the question: While conceding the importance of creative activity as an objective, are we justified in withholding from our students opportunities to experience and enjoy the work of others?

In a second grade class I once saw an example of the influence one child can have on his classmates. He was outstanding in drawing, and the class quickly

learned to look to him to produce very good pictures. The teacher spent some time discussing with the children a circus which had recently been in town. Everyone was interested and anxious to express some of his experiences while visiting it. They worked with enthusiasm on their drawings. The group of students who were seated in a position where they could see the drawing of the boy, whom they all knew to be very good, after working on their own drawings for a short while, tried to copy what he was doing. His picture represented a clown with a ruffled collar jumping through a paper covered hoop while riding a horse. After the drawings were collected, those coming from the children sitting near the talented boy were obviously attempts at copies. Strangely enough several of the drawings included shapes similar to those found in the one which was being copied, but were obviously used with no understanding of why they were in the picture. They had made no attempt to solve the same problem using means pointed out to them, but were merely concerned with putting marks on their papers which bore some resemblance to those they could see on the paper of the boy from whom they had learned to expect good results. There was an instructional problem which required great tact and understanding on the part of the teacher.

Other progressive teachers a little further toward the right from those advocating a complete hands-off policy, maintain that the child, when left entirely to himself, depends on faded memories of images which even if clearly remembered would not be suitable. They feel that the child needs contact with inspiring examples and an environment which will encourage the creation of beauty. Their conception of a satisfactory teacher is one who will stimulate the desire to express it in his own way with no interference from the teacher.

Many teachers, while agreeing on the desirability of an approach of this nature, feel that it is not enough. They would go one step further. The child while attempting to express himself is limited by lack of skill and knowledge in the handling of materials. Every picture involves a number of problems which the child frequently needs help in solving. If he does not obtain this assistance when needed, one of two things is likely to happen. He might become discouraged and lose interest in the motivating idea, or he might fall back into repeating a formula he has already learned with no desire to advance. The task of the teacher is to help the child surmount the obstacle by encouraging a problem solving approach in which there are several alternatives to choose. She should on no account provide the child with a ready-made solution.

The group constituting our last classification see creative activity as primarily a complicated learning situation in which many things may be happening in the mind of the child. They do not think of it as

a direct activity in response to a given stimulus. The stimulus may start an idea or a concept on its way until under its own momentum it becomes a unifying drive ultimately resulting in the production of some outward manifestation of the idea. In most cases it is built upon preceding learning situations, and as new problems arise they require additional information for their solution and perhaps increased technical skill for their expression. The teacher then guides the necessary research and acts as a technical advisor in the acquisition of the skills needed by various individuals to adequately express their ideas.

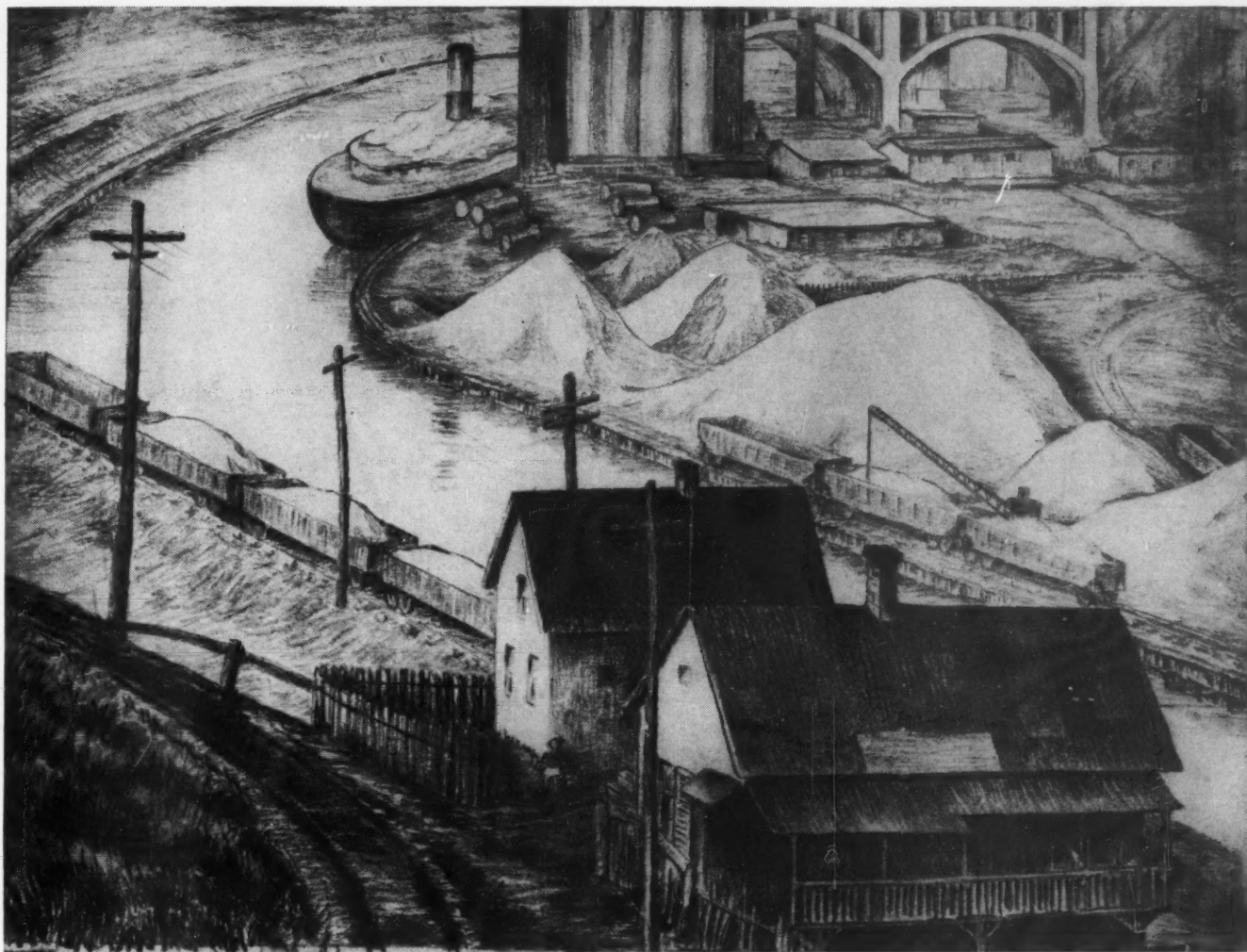
Summarizing some of the thoughts on what constitutes creative activity, we can arrive at a few generalizations. The most important fact is that something is going on in the mind of the child. The child is functioning as an independent individual having thoughts and ideas that are completely his own. The teacher and other adults are not a part of this process. They must accord it the respect due to the serious thinking of any sincere individual.

Frequently these thoughts are expressed in some outward form—but here a word of warning—not always. How do we know that those with the most facile expression are the ones who are thinking the greatest thoughts or feeling the deepest emotions? Perhaps the drawings that do not get into the exhibitions tell more important stories than those which do. One art educator, irritated by the stress on the production of exhibit on work exclaimed, "Why all this interest in pictures? It would be more sensible to hang up the children."

There tend to be set standards for work which must look creative. The drawings must be large, color must be used freely and somewhat carelessly, they must have the proper degree of naivete; indication of a lack of self criticism sometimes helps. Are we sure that there are always the right ones, or isn't it possible that some of the youngsters can turn out what the teachers wants for her exhibition without devoting much serious thought to the matter? Perhaps the quiet boy who never quite solves his problem in the proper exhibition style has much more going on inside than some of the regular exhibitors. Possibly this point has been overemphasized but lets make sure that we are not deceiving ourselves.

The most important objective the teacher can work towards is to encourage the child to develop a sensitivity to his environment and to strive for a sincere expression of his own thoughts. If the child experiences a strong enough reaction he will do something to express it. The desire for expression, which can be encouraged by sympathetic understanding on the part of the teacher, is more important than any outward form which it may take. For in this is the kernel of self-direction which can carry the individual to his maximum development.





ACROSS THE FLATS

OFFSET SOFT GROUND

GRACE V. LEONARD

## GRAPHIC ARTS PROCESS

*Made at Cleveland WPA Federal Art Projects*

An important new process is the offset soft ground, a tonal process resembling lithography more than ordinary softground. (As in lithography, the drawing is made with dark crayon so the artist can see the probable result instead of working blindly as in the case of etching.) The advantage over lithography is that the drawing on paper is made obverse and reverses on the plate to come back obverse in the proof, a great advantage in portraiture. One has absolute control over the most delicate passages fugitive even in experienced hands. The darks have the richness, depth, and the velvety quality of aquatint; large editions can be made without injury to the plate or loss of delicate tones. It does not take an expert to pull large editions as in the case of lithography.

In this type of soft ground the drawing is made on a piece of paper with charcoal, conte or similar type of crayon. A special soft ground is rolled on the plate. The drawing is transferred to the copper plate, coated with a special soft ground, by applying the pressure of the etching press. The plate is then dusted with asphaltum which sticks to the plate only where the crayon dust of the drawing has not already stuck. The plate is rinsed, dried, and heated, till the asphaltum becomes very hard ground. The offset of the crayon drawing which is still imbedded in the ground is now washed out with cotton and alcohol, leaving bare copper wherever this drawing had been. The areas of bare copper are broken up with an aquatint ground and the plate is bitten with or without stepping out. The plate is now printed like any other intaglio plate. This process was invented by Alexander von Kubinyi of Munich.



*A painting by Matisse*



*A painting compared to Matisse*

## *The Negro's Contribution*

# IN THE NEW ART EDUCATION

By Frienda Hagstrom

A new art education has grown out of the modern art movement. No longer is art thought of as "art for art's sake"; no longer is the work of the adult artist regarded as the goal of the child artist. Every child is a creator and his expression is at his level of experience.

The theory that a carefully oriented education of the child must be in terms of life needs has brought three trends in modern art education: (1) The Creative Experience of art education—a new emphasis on creative but significant experience of the child based upon life contacts and educational guidance. (2) The Appreciational Experience of art education—a realization that a new evaluation of art appreciation develops new attitudes on the part of the child. (3) The Functional Experience of art education—clear recognition of social objectives. "We are all artists" in our daily living, and art knowledge is essential for complete education in modern society.

The visible results obtained by this Creative-Appreciational-Functional art education are creative expressions of the individual. His art mirrors what he feels, sees, and thinks; he is the interpreter of his day at his level of experience, however rich or meager the experience may be. New interests and new beauty are opened to the individual under the guidance of competent teaching. "Eyes artistically opened rarely contract again; one is not less appreciative of the Greek statue after having learned to find beauty in the utterly different idiom of African sculpture. Italian madonnas will be no less beautiful because we can see and appreciate the varied beauty

and human interest of Negro physiognomy and Negro types, or of any and all diverse human types, for that matter. True, it is hard to discover beauty in the familiar, although one phase of art has taught us that; and it was doubly hard with the Negro type which in America had the combined handicap of familiarity and social contempt." Modern art has made it possible for Alain Locke, professor of philosophy at Howard University since 1912, to express such a profound truth that it would have been shocking and unbelievable before our new mode of thinking and evaluation.

The Negro student has made a unique and distinctive contribution to this new art educational movement with his colorful and dramatic ability to portray and interpret his experiences. His expression is frank and natural. He has few if any inhibitions, for his economic and social limitations have narrowed the cultural contacts that might have influenced his expression. Whether or not his art expression is an inherited strain trying to recapture a lost artistic heritage is difficult to say. Certain it is that the radical change in art style which characterizes the present trend in art which we call modern art resulted from interest and influence of primitive and Negro art.

About the turn of the Twentieth Century, European eyes were opened to the art values in African curios which had been collected by traders, soldiers, museum and private collectors, and imperialistic conquerors of England and Germany in the interior of Africa. One of the largest collections of cast bronzes and carved ivories was taken from the city of Benin





*"A Potted Plant." This composition shows feeling for repetition, rhythm, balance, unity, color, and discrimination.*

in West Africa in 1897 when a British military expedition sacked and burned the ancient native city as punishment for tribal raids and resistance to colonial penetration of the interior of that region. Discriminating critics recognized them to be of extraordinary workmanship in carving and casting, and saw that the bronze casting especially had been done by an ancient process by which the finest masterpieces have been made. At first the African curios had a scientific interest and were ethnologically regarded as museum pieces. Later a group of young painters and art critics in Paris came in contact with some of the fine specimens of native Africa fetish

carving from the French West Coast Colonies, and it was they who understood and appreciated the artistic value of the primitive African art, especially the sculpture.

The discovery of the new values of African art came at a time when the younger artists in France were restlessly experimenting for a new style and a new philosophy of art. European sculpture had become sterile, and impressionistic painting had about exhausted all the possibilities of an emphasis on color and dematerialization. Therefore, by a natural reaction, the problem of form and design was due for a new emphasis. Vlaminck discovered and acquired two Negro statues. Derain, his associate, saw and admired them; but it was Matisse of the Fauves who early formed a large collection which was matched by that of Picasso who made an independent discovery of Negro art. It is Picasso who is known as "the world's finest modernist," not in point of time, but in contemporary rating. This young genius became passionately interested in corrective re-appraisal of African art and made out of the old material a newly evaluated theory called "modernist art."

Looking at the Negro today, and particularly at the student in school, we find him deficient in manual work where technical accuracy is required. His pent-up emotions seem to find solace in dance, pantomime,

*Continued on page 24*

*Paintings by Negro students which show a striking similarity to Gauguin.*





## Illustrated Imagination

Since imagination is independent of the external world and truly creative because it presents images characterized by grandeur of conception and excitement of mood, the picture-forming powers of the ninth grade group at Audubon Junior High School were exercised by illustrating a story.

However, before starting this problem one unvarying rule was agreed by all; the compositions were not to be reproductions of other illustrators. The children were to be inspired by the tale, experience the feeling of adventure, then create their reactions. In order to give the pupil more freedom for the expression of his own creation, he was permitted to choose his own tools and medium. In most cases tempera and water colors were used.

The story selected was from *The Arabian Nights*: *Alladin and His Wonderful Lamp*. Although this tale was familiar to them, giving a visible body to the fancies recorded only in words was new. Therefore a creative attitude and a fresh point of view were stimulated.

The group listened attentively while the story was read once; then each child made a series of rough sketches, outlining the visual images that appealed most to him. It was interesting to note that the initial idea was illustrated in most of their finished compositions.

By Dolores L. Luckay  
Audubon Jr. High School  
Cleveland, Ohio

Because the adolescent mind experiences constant change and has a tendency to lapse, certain principles regarding this problem were stressed. These for the most part dealt with consistency of theme or motive. No other suggestions were made until the pupil had seen the actual need for additional help.

The "hocus-pocus" and other magic devices of the story stirred their imaginations. Many got excited over their ideas and designs and didn't mind how long they worked—just as we all do when we are expressing our desires or feelings.

There was a wide variety of resulting illustrations. Some tended toward actuality and others toward intricate design. One presented the mythical giant with such realism that blood-vessels and sinews are in evidence. Another was especially impressed with the huge cave lined with jewel-filled urns and gem trees. He experienced a sense of deep spaces where forms grow faint and disappear miles beyond. The effectiveness of Oriental pattern inspired others to stylize the genie's face and garments, with the lamp reflecting rich colors.

From a literary standard educators would be justi-

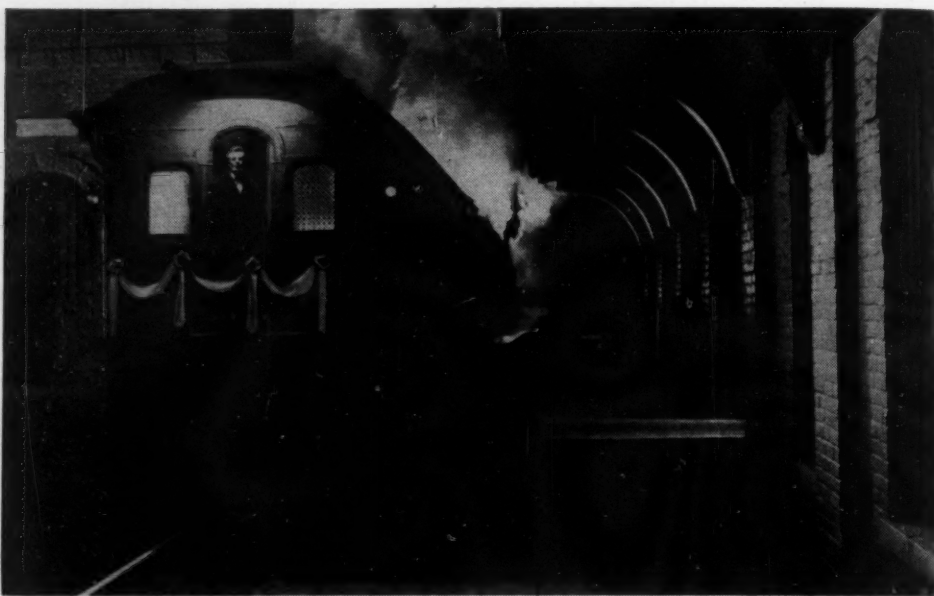




fied in saying that this selection was far below ninth grade level but of all peoples in the world none have originated such wonderfully colored and highly

imaginative stories as the Arabs. Their tales are full of the splendors of palaces and princes. They sparkle with jewels and are woven of magic.

# ABE LINCOLN IN ILLINOIS



R K O Radio Picture

Reviewed by ELIAS KATZ

In the screen adaptation of Robert E. Sherwood's Pulitzer Prize play, with Raymond Massey playing the title role again, we have an outstanding example of a Hollywood production which has loftiness of theme, and fine artistic merit. The straightforward sincerity of Mr. Massey's Lincoln does deep justice to our conception of the great Civil War president, in the period from his early youth up to his election to the presidency.

In this review, however, the facts presented in the film will not be stressed so much as are art qualities which have been considered and used in the developing of the theme.

Throughout the film a conscious effort has been made to compose each scene with a sense of good composition—what might be called "composition in the frame" (the "frame" being the technical name given to each specific photograph on the strip of motion picture film). While there are times when the figures in the composition of the scene are not finely organized and related, in the main, the figures, the backgrounds, and the landscape are finely integrated, to communicate the idea.

A second art factor which has been considered through the film is the factor of good lighting. Actually, in an art like that of motion pictures (and photography in general as well), the factor of lighting becomes of great importance, since lighting effects the mood to such a great extent. For example, in the very last scene of the film, when Lincoln leaves Illinois after having been elected President, the somber lighting sounds the knell of the future tragedy, which apparently he felt impending all his life. Likewise, when he is in love with Ann Rutledge, and a dance is being given at which she is the gayest of all persons (although actually her heart is breaking because of her love for another man), the dancers are gaily lighted, and there is constant play of bodily mo-

tion as they join in the quaint square dance.

A third art quality of which skillful use has been made is that of line direction. In motion pictures, line direction is often excellently developed in terms of interesting "angles", or views, which clarify the scene by placing the camera at an interesting angle for viewing the scene, rather than from the more customary eye-level position of the camera. By placing the camera below the figure of Lincoln, many times in the film we feel a certain monumental quality about the man. This device of foreshortening is of course as old as the Renaissance painters, especially Michaelangelo, who often created the effect of grandeur by placing the viewpoint of the observer below the figure, thereby foreshortening the upper portion of the figure. The line movements in the composition of the scenes have been carefully considered throughout the film, and aid greatly in raising its level as a fine motion picture.

Besides these art factors, an important value of this film for art minded persons, is that it makes real the period in which Lincoln lived. The costumes of the period, the homes in which the people lived, their general standards of taste in art and in other matters, and their outlook on life become a living, vital experience. Not only that, but the whole trend of the film, in a way, is directed toward our own day. Lincoln's espousal of the cause of abolition is closely related to the present struggles of democracies against dictatorships, and has many implications for today.

While we cannot call "Abe Lincoln in Illinois" a great film from the art point of view, it is certainly a good film from the art or any point of view. Surely it is an indication of the great progress which Hollywood is making to satisfy the standards of literary and artistic merit which have been developing the American movie-going public for the past few years. This is a film which should be seen and appreciated.



# Report of the Visual Aids Committee of the Eastern Arts Association

The Visual Aids Committee of the Eastern Arts Association presented two motion picture programs during the Philadelphia Convention at which groups of films dealing primarily with art teaching were shown. The meetings were in the nature of experimental sessions to determine the interest of the membership in the motion picture as a visual aid in art teaching, and in spite of a very crowded convention program which necessitated these meetings being held at times when other important sessions were scheduled, more than one hundred and forty attended.

Both meetings were held on Thursday, March 28, the first at 1:30 p.m. and the second at 8 p.m. The following films were shown in the order listed, the first seven at the first session; the last six at the second meeting:

**Arts and Crafts of Mexico.** Erpi Classroom Film Co., 35-11 35th Ave., Long Island City. 1 reel, sound, 11 mm. \$3.50 per day. Portrays native craftsmen at work in their homes. The steps in spinning, weaving, basketry, and pottery making are shown in detail.

**Arts and Crafts of American Indian.** Harmon Foundation, 140 Nassau St., New York. 1 reel, silent, 16 mm. \$1.50 per showing.

**Creative Design in Painting.** Walter D. Gutlohn, Inc., 35 W. 45th St., New York City. 1 reel, silent, 16 mm. \$1.50 per day. A demonstration by Professor Charles Martin, landscape painter, of the organization of lines and areas in a rectangle.

**Ceramics—Leon Volkmar.** Harmon Foundation. 2 reels, silent, 16 mm. \$3 per showing. A study of the art of pottery in the studio of Leon Volkmar.

**Hobbies—Soap Sculpture.** Walter D. Gutlohn, Inc. 1 reel, sound, 11 mm. \$1.50 per day. Shows what can be done with spare time. A sculptor carves clever designs from a bar of soap.

**Lynd Ward at Work.** (Woodcut). Walter D. Gutlohn, Inc. 1 reel, silent, 16 mm. \$1.50 per day. The artist engraves a block for an illustration and shows the complete process of wood engraving.

**Make a Mask.** Walter D. Gutlohn, Inc. 1 reel, silent, 16 mm. \$1.50 per day. A demonstration showing the steps in making a papier mache mask.

**Plastic Art.** (Sculpture). Erpi Classroom Films, Inc. 1 reel, sound, 11 mm. \$3.50 per day. Stages by which the sculptor conceives and executes a bronze statuary group.

**Rhythm in Light.** Commonwealth Pictures Corp., 729 7th Ave., New York. 1 reel, silent, 16 mm. Geometric forms develop and are synchronized to "Anitra's Dance."

**Synchromy No. 2.** Commonwealth Pictures Corp. 1 reel, sound, 11 mm. Pictorial composition in light and abstract forms, synchronized to Wagner's "Evening Star."

**Pottery Making.** Erpi Classroom Films Inc. 1 reel, sound, 11 mm. \$3.50 per day. A professional potter at work demonstrates several methods used in the making of pottery.

**Metal Craft.** Erpi Classroom Films Inc. 1 reel, sound, 11 mm. \$3.50 per day. A master craftsman presents and explains the steps taken in working with pewter, copper, and bronze.

**Joy of Self Expression Through Handicrafts.** Universal School of Handicrafts, 1270 6th Ave., New York City. 2 reels, silent, 16 mm. Free.

The large number of people who by their attendance showed their interest in the films as an art teaching medium demonstrated conclusively that the Visual Aid Committee is working in the right direction. Many questions were asked, and written requests were left in the guest book showing that there is need of much help and guidance in choosing film aids for school use. As much help as possible will be given from time to time through the bulletin, but a more extensive Visual Aid program will be developed for next year's convention, incorporating some of the following suggestions given: (1) The showing of films in classified groups under such headings as Art Appreciation, Crafts, Industrial Design, Photography, Architectural Design, etc. (2) Short discussions of evaluation periods after the showing of each film or group. (3) Mimeographed material concerning the films available. (4) Possibly a classroom demonstration showing the use of a film in teaching an art lesson. (5) The making of a film as an art problem. (6) Conferring with other groups actively interested in the art aspects of the motion picture as the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Committee on Motion Pictures of the Department of Secondary Education of the National Education Association, etc.

The above suggestions which have grown out of the Committee's experiences with the showings of films at the Eastern Arts Convention give some indication of the richness of the field of motion pictures in their relation to art and art education. It is to be hoped that plans for the coming convention will include provision for further expansion of these possibilities along lines which will yield the greatest benefit to art educators.

Thanks are due for the success of the Philadelphia meetings to the splendid cooperation of the motion picture distributors, who made their motion pictures available for the showings without charge. The equipment for the presentation was made available by Mr. Theodore Dillaway, with the cooperation of the Department of Visual Education of the Public Schools of Philadelphia.—Submitted by Elias Katz; approved by Edith L. Nichols, Chairman.

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### DESIGN AND STRUCTURE PROGRAM

Continued from page 9

set or room arrangement in which, outside of object arrangement, he has to emphasize "space tension" (increased awareness). He learns to employ psychological and physical properties. In the problem of spacial flows, the student uses transparent materials, such as glass, plastics, screening and strings.

Textures and surface treatments are given to the student in the two-dimensional design course, which has the same degree of importance and is related to all other studies.

In color the student learns by direct experience the chemistry of light, tecnic of application; he studies media and relationships. We have an up-to-date, fully equipped photographic and physics laboratory, with many visual-aid accessories.

After the student has acquainted himself with the forces of form, space and light in typical situations, he proceeds to apply them to more complicated problems involving specific technics and materials. For while he has used some of the materials previously, he has used them only as a vehicle to evoke the forces which control design in a generic fashion. The subsequent problems are more definitive in character; they are conditioned by consideration of purpose (function), material, methods of production, and tools. The emphasis, however, is still on design and structure, excluding actual solutions for commerce

and industry. To effect a transition from pure design problems to situations professional in nature, we have devised control problems, which the student executes in collaboration with the staff in the professional division of our school.

The same procedure of presentation is followed in the other courses, namely the abstraction of fundamentals and their use in correlated experiences diverse in character, which is essential to produce controlled knowledge. We would like to indicate that we consider our Foundation Year's course just as valuable an introduction to the fine arts, such as painting and sculpture, as it is for industrial design and architecture.

We do not regard art through the narrow slits of personalized foibles. We want the student to acquire broad concepts of visual forces and human experience in aesthetics so that he may have a free expression in his pursuit of beauty as an integral part of existence.

### THE NEGRO'S CONTRIBUTION

Continued from page 19

and song. This happy nature is unconsciously and naturally portrayed in his art. He feels rhythm, he loves "swing," the mere utterance of the word brings forth expressions of pleasure and demonstrations with hands, feet, and body. The feeling mind learns to know through commonplace terms. Thus one of the technicalities which makes good art—that rhythm is a principle of art composition—is unconsciously learned. The dance is a spontaneous and normal mode of expression rather than an artificial and formalized one. This innate quality of rhythm, this balance, this graceful movement of swing, is manifest in the illustrations.

The Negro's gift of song is an accepted attribute of his emotional nature. Of the three types of Negro music—folk, popular, and classical—his folk music has been produced without formal musical training or intention by the greatest and most fundamental of all musical forces—emotional creation. This rich vein of emotional expression has yielded the spirituals. In portraying them there is a spontaneity that comes from familiarity of the songs from childhood and a sincerity that their religious nature expresses.

Simplicity of forms, absence of detail, use of pure color, and disregard for perspective are characteristics of the Fauve paintings. Upon comparing the paintings of the Negro students with those of Matisse, outstanding exponent of the Fauves, a shocking similarity is quite apparent. Again likenesses are seen between students' work and Gauguin, that post-Impressionist artist, typically Bohemian, who rejected the artificialities of life that he might find and express reality among the simple people of nature in Tahiti.



## CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

George Grosz of Douglaston, Long Island, New York, was awarded the Watson F. Blair Prize of \$600 for his water color and ink drawing "Cape Cod No. 3" in the Nineteenth International Exhibition of Water Colors opening at the Art Institute of Chicago on April 25 to continue until May 26, according to a recent announcement. Reginald Marsh of New York City was awarded the Watson F. Blair Prize of \$400 for his water color "Summer in New York."

The \$200 Municipal Art League Purchase Prize (for a painting to be donated to a public school) was awarded by the Municipal Art League of Chicago to Oskar Gross for his painting "Mother Earth" now on view at the Art Institute. The prize winning painting depicts a group of Tyrolean peasants pulling a plow.

An exhibition of furniture in modern plastics designed by Mrs. G. Howard Davison opens Wednesday, May 1, at the Alice Baldwin Beer Gallery, 41 East 57th Street, New York City, and will continue through Tuesday, May 14. This exhibition is interesting as it introduces taste into the design of modern functional furniture made out of plastics. Mrs. Davison works in three plastics in her furniture pieces known under the trade names of Lucite, Plexiglas, and Marblette. Each medium, as in sculpture, imposes its own peculiar demands in handling with which Mrs. Davison must deal in creating her designs.

A comprehensive exhibition of the portrait prints in which Sharaku depicted the heroes and villains of the popular Japanese theatre of the closing years of the Eighteenth Century, recently opened at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street, New York City. Only 136 examples of this artist's work are known to exist. Of this number 108 are shown in the exhibition; the remaining 28 represented by photographs. Besides these there are eight drawings and two fans, which make the record of his known work complete.

Twenty-six paintings belonging to the "great tradition" in French art were taken from New York recently to be shown in the Cabildo. This exhibition was taken from the Wildenstein galleries and was arranged for by James J. A. Fortier, director of the Louisiana State Museum.

The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street, recently opened to the public "Four American Traveling Exhibitions" composed of eleven new accessions to the Museum's permanent collection and a selection from the best work done under the WPA Federal Art Program during the past four years. These four exhibitions will be on view at the Museum for approximately one month, after which they will be sent by the Museum's Department of Circulating Exhibitions to other museums, art galleries, schools and colleges throughout the country. The shows are titled as follows: "The Face of America"; "35 Under 35"; "Mystery and Sentiment"; and "Prints by Jennie Lewis."

The first exhibition of Argentine art to be sent on a nation-wide tour of the United States opened last month at the New York Junior League, according to an announcement. Arranged by The American Federation of Arts, after its initial showing in New York it starts on a circuit which will take it to the West Coast and back, with engagements in leading museums, galleries, and universities. The exhibition is composed of thirty paintings, twenty-eight prints, and seven sculptures, and is a distillation of the larger exhibition of Argentine art held at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in January and February of this year.

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### EDITORIAL NOTE:

Many inquiries have come to our editorial staff from persons desiring to submit material for publication in **DESIGN**. We are always interested in a wide range of material pertinent to art in its various expressions—art education in its broadest sense, creative art, industrial art, crafts, leisure time activity, new methods and materials, helps for teachers and students. With few exceptions, articles should be fully illustrated. All material submitted should be properly labeled and identified.

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The Associated American Artist's Galleries, 711 Fifth Ave., New York City, announces the following May exhibitions: April 15 through May 4, Paintings of Arnold Blanch; May 6 through May 20: Paintings of Jacques Zucker; and May 27 through July 15: Group show of members of the Associated American Artists.

The Syracuse Museum of Fine Arts, Syracuse, New York, is offering the following exhibitions current in May: School Art Exhibit, through May 6; Humane Poster National Competition, May 6-13; The Edith Show, through May 12; One man show of Regina Gates, May 13 to June 3.

The American Artists' Congress recently held its Fourth Annual Membership Exhibition in New York City. The show was titled "Art in a Democracy" and members from Maine to California were represented. The exhibition included oils, water colors, photographs, prints, and sculptures. Two symposia were held at the gallery during the show. The title of the first was "Voice of the People" and the second was an art "Information Please."

The American Artists' Congress was established in 1936 under the executive secretaryship of Stuart Davis to bring together artists of recognized standing in their profession who are aware of the critical conditions existing in world culture in general and in the field of art in particular. The aim of the Congress, according to its announcements, is to fill the need for an artists' organization on a nation-wide scale to deal with the cultural problems of artists.

## COLLEGE ACTIVITIES

Announcement has come from Mills College, Oakland, California, that the Chicago School of Design will hold its 1940 summer session on the Mills campus. L. Moholy-Nagy, director of the Chicago institution, will take with him to the coast a number of the members of his staff.

The session will also offer two special features: A course in "Modern Trends in the School Art Curriculum" by Miss Alice Schoelkopf, supervisor of art in the Oakland Public Schools; and a workshop on "The Arts in Education" sponsored by the Progressive Education Association, and directed by Frederick L. Redefor.

The Directors of Cranbrook Academy of Art and the Editors of Life magazine joined recently in announcing The Cranbrook-Life Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting at Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, opening May 18 and continuing through June 2. Among painters whose work will be shown are Thomas Benton, John Steuart Curry, Reginald Marsh, Doris Lee, Eugene Speicher, Frederic Taubes, Grant Wood, George Biddle, Charles Burchfield, Jon Corbino, Vaughn Flannery, and Peter Hurd, the announcement stated.

McLane Art Institute has recently announced its summer courses, which include courses in design, advertising, fashion illustration, and other related subjects, as well as for special instruction in various types of commercial work, work that would be required by teachers in commercial high schools. The school is located at 1755 Broadway at 56th Street, New York City.



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